

VZCZCXYZ0014
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHSK #1164 2661355
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 231355Z SEP 05
FM AMEMBASSY MINSK
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3043
INFO RUEHVL/AMEMBASSY VILNIUS 3370
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 3148
RUEHRA/AMEMBASSY RIGA 1417
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW 3038
RUEHKV/AMEMBASSY KIEV 2924
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 0670
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK

C O N F I D E N T I A L MINSK 001164

SIPDIS

KIEV FOR USAID

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/22/15
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [BO](#)
SUBJECT: MOJ: Any Political Organization Must Register

Refs: (A) Minsk 1099, (B) Minsk 884

Classified by Ambassador George Krol for Reasons 1.4 (B,D)

¶1. (U) On September 19 Minister of Justice Viktor Golovanov signed a "postanovlenie" (ruling, or ordinance) regulating the political activities of Belarusians. Specifically, the ruling demands that, "Before conducting any events of a political character or forming any blocs of political parties, or blocs of political parties and trade unions, or creating any kind of 'movements,' 'initiatives,' 'coalitions,' unions of citizens or legal entities," the bloc/coalition/movement must be registered with the MOJ. It goes on to say that this ruling applies to any organization "that shows the signs of having political goals." The ruling states that activity by an unregistered group is illegal, but does not prescribe a punishment.

¶2. (C) Econoff met with Vladimir Labkovich and Vladimir Stepanovich, lawyers with the deregistered human rights NGO Vyasna, on September 22. They explained that a MOJ postanovlenie is not a law, but de facto it will have the weight of law. This ruling violates both the Citizen's Codex and the old and new (not yet in force) laws "On Political Parties," but the human rights lawyers do not think that will affect its implementation. Labkovich and Stepanovich both believe this ruling is designed to hurt the opposition before the 2006 presidential elections, and provides one more excuse to give political parties legal warnings, and possibly revoke their registration.

¶3. (C) Comment: This ruling is clearly aimed at the political opposition, currently consisting of one main (10+) and three smaller coalitions (European Coalition, Free Belarus, Voitovich/Frolov/Leonov). Although Lukashenko recently made the surprise announcement that the GOB would help the 10+ hold its nominating congress in Minsk (ref A), this decree and other recent actions, such as liquidating the majority of the parties' local branches (ref B), probably demonstrate the true intentions of the Lukashenko regime and its desire to neuter all competition before the elections.

KROL